

National Professional Certification in Customer Service Human Services Cluster

(High Skill, High Wage, High Demand = Consumer Services)

Name and Description of Project:

The National Retail Federation Foundation's (NRFF) educational and career development programs encourage professional growth and superior performance in retailing for associates and executives at all levels. NRFF training and curriculum products align with industry skill standards and highlight career advancement opportunities. NRFF programs incorporate input from employers to ensure workplace success. This professional credential provides an excellent capstone to training programs as they establish clear performance expectations, provide a formal documentation of knowledge, and demonstrate commitment to professional growth.

Major Activities:

Teacher completes training and necessary requirements to be a proctor for the certification exam.

Complete necessary requirements to become a private testing site.

Test students who have meet the eligibility requirements for certification.

Performance Indicator:

Skill Attainment with certification

Measurement:

The success of this project will be measured by the number of students who successfully earn a National Certification in Certification.

Professional Development:

Professional Development and exam preparation are available at the NRFF website.
www.nrffoundation.com

Instructional Materials/Supplies:

Registration fees, training materials, and exam fees are allowable expenses

Equipment:

Possible with justification

Knowledge and Skill Areas

The assessment to earn the customer service certification measures and validates knowledge in the following areas:

- Learns about products or services
- Assesses customer needs
- Educates customer
- Meets customers' needs and provides ongoing support

How to Earn

Candidates can earn the customer service certification by passing a 75-question, online assessment. The assessment must be proctored. Candidates can schedule testing at test centers across the U.S.A., or companies can set-up as a private test site, have proctors trained, and offer the assessment internally. The base price of the exam is \$50 to \$80, depending on the test site.

Training Resources to Help Prepare

The Candidate Handbook outlines the testing process, provides sample questions, and gives detailed information on the Critical Work Function Areas covered on the exam. The knowledge and skill areas are found on page 15. Look under the section 'Work-Oriented Component.' All questions on the certification exam are directly related to the key activities in each Critical Work Function.

Candidates can view an online demonstration of the exam to see the format and sample questions. Sales & Service Learning Program is a comprehensive program for instructors, designed to prepare participants for entry-level retail sales and customer service positions. This 120-180 program helps prepare candidates for both the professional customer service and sales certifications.

Our Retailing Smarts Series Learner Workbooks are recommended to prepare candidates for the exam, as they were developed using the same skill standards. Books 1-4 help prepare for customer service: Get to Know Your Customer (Workbook 1), Meet Your Customers' Needs (Workbook 2), Build a Continuous Relationship (Workbook 3), and Go the Extra Mile (Workbook 4). These books contain activities that are highly interactive and scenario-based, much like the tests. There is an instructor's guide to the workbooks that can be ordered separately: Providing Personalized Customer Service: Leader's Guide, Professional Edition.

How To Become a Private Testing Site

1. Complete the required paperwork. The Site Profile form identifies the main contact for testing and the proctor(s) who will administer the exams (we recommend sites have at least 2 proctors). If you are not opening your site to the public (candidates not enrolled in your program), then indicate 'not applicable' in the "Your Facility" section.
2. Once NRF Foundation receives the paperwork, we will send you a confirmation email outlining the next steps, process an invoice, and put your proctors in contact with CASTLE Worldwide (our testing partner). CASTLE Worldwide will contact your proctors directly with materials to review for the proctor training, and they will also explain the technical and system requirements for set-up. There is no software to install on your computers, but we need to make sure you have upgraded Internet browsers, etc. The proctor training takes about a half-hour, can be conducted over the phone, but Internet access is required.
3. Pricing Information: There is a one-time, site set-up fee of \$250, to cover proctor training and on-going IT support from CASTLE, as needed. All new test sites are required to order a minimum of 25 test vouchers at the time of set-up. The cost of the customer service and sales test vouchers is \$50/per test; retail management and the retail business credential is \$80/per test. The test vouchers are good for one year from the month issued. NRF Foundation requires payment before test vouchers are issued.